



# Northern Iraq



Photo By Staff Sgt. Suzanne M. Jenkins

Teachers of Al-Khaldia Elementary School in Kirkuk, Iraq, sort through donated supplies brought to the school by Air Force and Army personnel stationed at Kirkuk Air Base.

## Iraqi school supplied with tools for learning

By Senior Master Sgt. Eugene LaDoucer  
506th Air Expeditionary Group

**KIRKUK** — Three members of the 506th Expeditionary Communications Squadron joined Army coalition education advisors Nov. 11 in taking donated school supplies to a Kirkuk elementary school.

1st Lt. Todd Allison, 506th ECS base-level systems flight commander, led an effort through his wife, Stacy, and his home unit, the 52nd Communications Squadron at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, gathering about 125 pounds of supplies for the 330 students of Al-Khaldia Elementary School. Master Sgt. Jeff Wepner and Staff Sgt. Don Turner, also from Spangdahlem,

joined Allison for the visit to the school.

Students and teachers alike were delighted at the site of the boxes filled with pencils, paper, crayons, glue, scissors and other needed supplies. Most of the 330 students, though shy at first, soon streamed into the courtyard of the 12-classroom school to have their picture taken with the airmen and soldiers and shake their hands. Several were eager to show off their skill at ping-pong and thumb wrestling against their visitors.

"The smiling faces of the kids and the reception we got from everyone at the school was awesome," Allison said, who set a personal goal of doing something helpful for the Iraqi community

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## U.S. Reps tour girls' school, praise students' progress

By Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Williams  
506th Air Expeditionary Group

**KIRKUK AIR BASE** — A delegation of 10 U.S. Representatives met with 90 students Nov. 10 during an hour-long visit to the Kirkuk Secondary School for Girls.

The congressmen were given a tour of the schoolhouse and discussed the educational needs of Iraqis with their teachers.

Said one teacher, "There is no college or university in Kirkuk. Right now, all of their hope is in Kirkuk. This is as high as they go. We need colleges and universities."

Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (R-Mo.), the delegation's only female, had a chance to speak to a class of 45 18-year-old girls and answer questions about America.

When Emerson asked, "How many of you would like to come to America someday," everybody raised their hands with excitement.

"I'm so impressed that we took the time to get the schools up and running again. Education is so important for everybody, not just now but for the future of these people as well" she said.

Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-Ariz.), who led the delegation, was impressed with the school.

"It's impressive to see those young girls in school," Kolbe said. "It's a good start but a lot still needs to be done. It's good that the girls are getting an education here."

As the group left the building, Representatives John Sweeney (R-N.Y.), Dave Weldon (R-Fla.) and David Price (D-N.C.) talked with some Iraqi boys from another nearby school, and posed for photos.

After the school visit, the members sat down with Abdulrahman Mustafa, mayor of Kirkuk, and the city's governing council.

"It was a good visit," Kolbe said. "The mayor and governing council had some needs they wanted to discuss with those of us in Washington. It was a productive meeting."

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Contributions to the newspaper are welcome from servicemembers in northern Iraq.  
Submit stories to [cpiccmdinfo@baghdadforum.com](mailto:cpiccmdinfo@baghdadforum.com).





## Say "ahh" for health care



Photo by Sgt. Jack Morse/982nd Signal Company

**Maj. Tom Eccles, a doctor with the 205th Military Intelligence Brigade, examines an Iraqi boy at a school near Balad, Iraq, as part of a routine Medical Capabilities (Medcap) mission in late October. Soldiers from 64th Forward Support Battalion, 502nd Dental Company (Area Support) and 561st Medical Company (Dental Services) also participated. The soldiers provided medical and dental care for about 300 children at the school.**

## Balad opens runway to new aircraft for first time

### C-5 galaxy to aid soldiers' missions, travel significantly

**By Capt. Monica Bland**  
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

**BALAD** — The first C-5 Galaxy arrived here Nov. 12, from Dover Air Force Base, Del., increasing the Air Force presence at the Army's Logistical Support Area. A 14-person crew and about 21 truckloads of war materiel were on board the aircraft.

"This event is a significant milestone in support of the global war on terrorism and continuing joint operations in this region," said Col. Frank Padilla, commander of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing's Detachment 1.

"The more cargo (the Air Force) can bring in using aircraft can exponentially reduce the amount of vehicle convoys required from Baghdad International Airport, to transport much needed cargo into and out of here," Padilla said.

The routes used to convoy cargo on the roads to

Balad are dangerous. Fewer Army trucks on the road translates to potentially more American lives saved.

No other aircraft in the Air Force inventory has the 270,000-pound cargo-carrying capacity of the C-5. It can carry twice as much as the next largest jet in the Air Force inventory.

The C-5 can carry fully equipped combat-ready military units to any point in the world on short notice, and then provide field support required to help sustain the force, officials said. As primarily a strategic airlifter, it is not normally used in a tactical environment. However, when used in-theater, it can quickly relieve cargo backlogs, and provide critically needed airlift for missions like unit redeployments or troop rotation.

There are also challenges associated with bringing the C-5 into remote airfields like Balad, officials said.

The C-5 requires a longer runway and more parking space than other aircraft designed for use in remote locations and tactical operations, like the C-130 Hercules.

Soldiers, realizing the full implications of the C-5's arrival, said they were just as excited as the airmen as the aircraft taxied to the ramp.

"This event was tremendously important to all of us here," Padilla said.

## Northern Iraq Briefs

### 101st raids nab nine detainees

**MOSUL** — Acting on information from cooperative Iraqi citizens, soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) conducted two raids in the Mosul area on Nov. 14 that resulted in eight individuals detained for suspicion of conducting attacks against Coalition Forces and having previous Fedayeen membership.

Additionally, one individual, wanted for conducting attacks against Coalition Forces, turned himself in.

Also, in the continuing effort to bring peace to Iraq, the Coalition for Iraqi National Unity, a political party sympathetic to U.S. military efforts, turned in one surface-to-air missile, 11 anti-tank missiles, 38 rocket-propelled grenade boosters and four RPG rounds. *(Courtesy 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs Office)*

### Enemy killed aiming rockets toward coalition base

**TIKRIT** — An AH-64 "Apache" helicopter observed and fired on attackers as they were aiming rockets at a Task Force Speicher forward operating base in the evening of Nov. 13. Seven attackers were killed and one was wounded as a result of the confrontation.

In response to the attack a patrol from 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry went to the location where the attackers were and verified that the attackers suffered casualties. Additionally, the patrol found three destroyed vehicles that included a flat bed truck carrying 50 missiles.

After searching the area, the patrol discovered two bunkers near the attack site filled with just over 900 BM-21 missiles, 6ft. in length and 6in. in diameter.

The wounded attacker was treated at a battalion aid station and the bodies of the enemy casualties were taken to the local police station for identification and next-of-kin recovery of the remains.

This action is part of Task Force Ironhorse's "Operation Ivy Cyclone." The operation is ongoing, focusing on aggressive offensive operations including patrols, ambushes, cordon and searches and raids. *(Courtesy 4th Infantry Division Public Affairs Office)*

### Iraqi children lead 101st to IEDs

**MOSUL** — Iraqi children led soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) to two improvised explosive devices in Mosul Nov. 11, and soldiers discovered a third device before it exploded.

In the first incident, two children led members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team to two IEDs near the Qayyarah Civil Military Operations Center at about 7 p.m. Nov. 11.

In the second incident, a patrol from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team found an unexploded IED in Mosul near one of the five major bridges at about 8:15 p.m. *(Courtesy 101st Airborne Division Public Affairs Office)*

# Regional airport takes flight in Iraq

## Soldiers, Iraqi ministry team up to reconstruct airstrip for northern region

By Spc. Joshua Hutcheson  
101st Airborne Division

**KIRKUK** — The former Bakrajo airstrip in northern Iraq, created by Saddam Hussein in 1988 to transport troops, will soon become a regional airport for the people of As Sulayimaniyah.

Soldiers from the 887th Engineer Company, attached to the 326th Engineer Battalion, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) are working with Kurdish laborers to expand the old airstrip into "a regional hub airport for flights between Baghdad, Mosul and Turkey," said Capt. Andrew Loeb, commander, 887th Engineer Company.

"It's a joint project working with the ministry of

reconstruction for the As Sulayimaniyah province," he said.

The work began Aug. 20 and is scheduled to be complete by Dec. 1, Loeb said.

The 887th specializes in air-field repair, which is why they were chosen to help expand the Bakrajo airfield, Loeb said. Their main job is "providing expertise, design and equipment operators for compaction. Which means that basically we're doing everything under the surface of the asphalt, Loeb said.

The engineers have so far helped to build a "hammerhead" where planes can turn around, parking aprons, a 9,500-foot taxiway and have patched and repaired 49 holes in the 10,500-foot main runway.

The soldiers used heavy equipment to lay down and smooth out filler material on taxiways and other portions of the strip. Then asphalt was poured over top and smoothed out to create a level surface for the planes.

The Al-Salam Company was hired by the local government to lay down the asphalt. Hiring the local company was a way to bring money and jobs

into the region, which is something the military and the people of As Sulayimaniyah hope the airport will also accomplish.

"One of the things a city this size needs is a regional airport," Loeb said.

The Bakrajo airport will have the potential to bring in tourists from the hotter southern portion of Iraq, as well as from neighboring countries. Coupled with the employment opportunities, the airport could revitalize the underdeveloped northern region.

The soldiers are responsible for expanding the taxiways and parking aprons. Adding the lights, fences, the terminal and other things needed to complete the airport will be the job of local construction companies, Loeb said.

Once it's complete, the airport will be able to handle planes "the size of C-130 cargo planes, and smaller," Loeb said.

The soldiers of 887th are pleased with the work they've done over the last three months, Loeb said.

"They're contributing something to this country that they can walk away from and remember 10 years down the line," he said.

## Helping hands reach out beyond operations

By Spc. Kent Blake  
22nd Mobile Public Affairs  
Detachment

**QAYARAH** — Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) are working to not only make Iraq secure, but have also been putting time and effort into helping towns and villages with their "Operation Helping Hands" and "Adopt a Village" programs.

With "Operation Helping Hands," soldiers donate money to help provide families with food and healthcare necessities.

"Our Brigade Commander, Col. Hodges, came up with the idea of

helping the poor families in our area, especially now during Ramadan when families and friends are coming together for evening celebrations," said Maj. Rodie Lamb of Beauford, S.C., a chaplain with 1st Brigade.

Each unit takes the money they collect and puts it into the district that they are working in.

"Down to the unit level, the soldiers get to go out into the community to see where their money is helping," Lamb said. "We've collected several thousand dollars. Our soldiers have been very generous."

Outreach to help the people of Iraq has not only been coming

directly from the soldiers through the "Adopt a Village" program, but individuals and organizations have been donating goods as well.

"We have people from the States sending boxes with medical supplies, personal care items and school supplies," Lamb said.

"The response has been overwhelming. The people in the United States don't get to see what we are doing here first hand, and it has been amazing to see their desire to get involved."

"We identified the towns and cities that could donate goods for Iraqi villages," said Capt. Charles Atanasio, chaplain with the 426th

Forward Support Battalion.

According to Atanasio, he also contacted the "Adopt a Platoon" group that he had already been involved with, and has been receiving help from them as well.

"We have the donors send pictures of themselves as well as a brief story about themselves, and then we send them a picture of the people they are helping," Atanasio said.

According to Atanasio, packages have been coming in from all over the United States in support of the villages.

"I'm just really glad to be a part of the process and helping reach out to the people here," Atanasio said.



### Weekly Words of Wisdom

“As long as we have faith in our own cause and an unconquerable will to win, victory will not be denied us.”

—Winston Churchill

Shhh! Remember our enemies are listening. They want to know what you know.  
Keep it to yourself.



## Kirkuk Airbase Chapel Schedule

### Friday

5 a.m., 7 p.m. – Islamic prayer

9 a.m. – Catholic Mass (Sky Soldier chapel)

### Saturday

7 p.m. – Catholic Mass

### Sunday

8 a.m. – Gospel Service

9 a.m. – Catholic Mass

(Sky Soldier chapel)

10 a.m. – General Protestant

11:30 a.m. – Catholic Mass

1 p.m. – Latter-Day Saints

2 p.m. – Catholic Mass (Sky Soldiers Chapel)

7 p.m. – Protestant Service

### Tuesday

6:30 p.m. – Growing as a Christian:  
Studying the Book of James

### Wednesday

8 a.m. – The Bible in Light of Current  
History and Local Events

5:30 p.m. – Building Your Faith:  
Studying the Book of Hebrews

\*All services are held at the Ten Days From Tomorrow Chapel unless otherwise noted. Times subject to change. Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist and others should contact chapel administration for updates of their religious requirements and support.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Suzanne M. Jenkins

**A class of students at Al-Kahldia Elementary School, Kirkuk, Iraq, show off their new pencils. About 125 pounds of donated supplies were delivered to the 330 students of the school by Air Force and Army personnel stationed at Kirkuk Air Base.**

### SUPPLIES

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during his deployment in the country.

"The warrior attitude we have developed was set aside for a short time. I love kids and helping those students made my deployment here more personal," he said.

"I want everyone at Spangdahlem who donated supplies to know their kindnesses is very much appreciated by the children and staff of this school," he added.

According to one teacher at the recently renovated school, the visit marked the first time U.S.

military members had visited the school.

"The children are very excited and happy to have you here. Today we feel free," she said through an interpreter.

The school's headmaster, Suhaila Yosef Grrabet, repeatedly thanked the airmen and soldiers for their efforts on behalf of her school.

"This is very good. Thank you for your kindness," she told each member of the group.

For their part, the children echoed the sentiments of their headmaster. As the visit came to an end, a classroom of 6-year-old students proudly displayed their new pencils and sang out in perfect English, "Thank you for your kindness."

### REPRESENTATIVES

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Emerson was surprised at the outcome of the meeting with the council.

"We have the various groups in the governing council sitting down together in a very conciliatory way. That's remarkable," she said.

During their few hours in Kirkuk, the delegation seemed pleased with the way things were going in the developing region.

Emerson summed up her feelings best when she smiled and said, "I'm proud that we have a military that sets a great example for everyone."

## 21st Combat Support Hospital

*serving you at two locations...*

Sick call and dental clinic

hours of operation

**Balad**

8 — 11 a.m. and 3 — 5 p.m.

**Mosul**

7 a.m. — 4 p.m.

Emergency rooms are open 24 hours a day.



**How are you spending the holiday season in Iraq?**

**Your holiday wish lists, pictures and Dear Santa letters are welcome for publication in the holiday editions of the Scimitar throughout the holiday season.**

**Submissions can be e-mailed to  
[cpiccmdinfo@baghdadforum.com](mailto:cpiccmdinfo@baghdadforum.com).**